The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Men commonly think according to their inclinations.—Bacon.

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SCENERY CAN'T HIDE COMPANY "UNION" PLOT

A professional "labor authority" defends the company "union" of the Philadelphia Traction Company. He says:

> "The Mitten plan of industrial cooperation as applied during the past 17 years in Philadelphia has lacked only one fundamental requirement as measured by union standards and those of industrial democracy—the recognition of the union as the basis of collective bargaining. In all other respects it has been in accord with the underlying principles and aspirations of the organized labor movement."

When will our intelligentsia understand that the bedrock principle of trade unionism is collective bargaining, and that if this is denied, all else is nothing?

When will our intelligentsia abandon their theory that collective bargaining is merely a method to haggle over a few pence increase?

When will they see—or rather, when will they acknowledge—that through collective bargaining (another name for united action) every aspiration of workers can become a reality?

To say that the company "union" is identical to trade unionism, save collective bargaining, is to say that autocracy and democracy are identical, save that in the latter case citizens rule themselves.

The company "union" recalls the historic fact that autocracy changes its form without losing its essence.

Company "union" advocates rest their cause on the hope that man's judgments may be misled by outward refinements.

Open trade union antagonism is tactless in this age of organization. The company "union," with its pious pretense, and supported by the artistry of paid phrase makers, is substituted.

The new system brings no change into the lives of these wage earners. The employer controls the fake "union." This places him in as complete command of his mentally-drugged workers as when they were terrified by the espionage of secret detectives.

No outward form can conceal the fact that a worker is not free when he is denied an unchallenged voice in wages and working conditions.

If he must be submissive in this case, he is submissive in every civic and social activity. Because he stands alone he can not develop courage to resist injustice.

Workers who are forced to join a company "union" or to sign a "yellow dog" do not protest against wrong. They never respond to pleas of the defenseless and weak.

They are "contented" workers, without ideals, so essential in a democracy. They view trade unionism as they are directed by an intelligentsia who are paid to stupify the intellect.

Rum Spies Shock Nation's Capital; Plan To Legalize Them Is Opposed

Washington, Sept. 22.—Prohibition enforcement methods are again under fire in the Nation's capital because of the exposures of police spies and stool pigeons. Washington is the only city where the police are under control of the Federal government.

Eight stool pigeons have been exposed as perjurers during this year. Four are serving penitentiary sentences and two are booked for trial. It is claimed that other perjury cases could be developed if the victimized had influence or means to have their cases investigated.

These scandals have brought suggestions that the informers be placed under the civil service. The plan is lashed by local newspapers.

The Washington Post quotes the Prohibition Bureau and Civil Service Commissioners as being "favorably impressed by the idea."

"It is difficult to deal patiently with such distorted reasoning," says the Post, in a leading editorial. "Do these officials imagine that there are honest spies to be had? Are they seriously contemplating the employment by the government of individuals to lie, misrepresent their identity and maintain intimate relations with criminals while remaining honest?

"The spy's work is crooked in itself. No one but a liar and a thief would do such work. The employer of a spy expects him to be a liar and a crook, and knows that he can hold the spy's loyalty by paying him more than the spy could make by betraying his employer. In the liquor business as it is now transacted in the United States the government could not afford to bribe its spies to remain loyal. It could not compete with the big bootleggers, who stand ready to buy off spies when they can not be disposed of otherwise.

"The hiring of spies, snoopers, stool pigeons and informers is a dirty business. The government can not keep traitors and perjurers on its pay rolls without continuous scandals that will ruin all the officials concerned. Public opinion is opposed to the attempted enforcement of any law by dishonorable or criminal means."

POWER TRUST PROBE IS AGAIN OPERATING

Washington, Sept. 22.—The Federal Trade Commission has resumed its hearings on power trust propaganda.

The investigation was authorized when the Senate adopted the Walsh (Mont.) resolution. It has been disclosed that approximately $1,000,000 a year was spent by the combined utility units in their war against public ownership or control of public utilities. The fight was directly aimed at the Norris plan for government ownership of Muscle Shoals and against the Swing-Johnson Boulder Dam Canyon bill that would harness the Colorado River.

The investigation shows that the utilities' representatives freely used the terms "Bolshevik" and "Socialist" against those who opposed private control of natural resources. These publicity agents deluged the press with "news releases" and "canned editorials" and boasted of the amount of free space won for the trust. One of these agents declared that country editors are "God's fools."

Scores of college professors were secretly employed to write text books for public schools and to make speeches in favor of "private initiative." Publishers of text books were also reached.

Former Senator Lenroot, a prominent candidate for vice president in the convention that nominated Warren G. Harding for president, was shown to have received $20,000 for opposing the Walsh investigating resolution.

An attack on the Ontario publicly-owned hydro-electric plant, issued under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, turned out to have been written by a man who received $3,000 from the National Electric Light Association. The Smithsonian, which is a government institution at Washington, repudiated the report.

WORKERS MAY UNITE, STATE BOARD HOLDS

Denver, Sept. 22.—The State Industrial Commission gravely pondered over the question of whether workers may unite, and has finally handed down an affirmative reply.

The case involved organized laundry wagon drivers, whose president was victimized by a member of the employers' organization.

The State Commission sits in judgment on labor controversies. It is illegal for employes to suspend work until the commission publishes its findings.

The commission recently declared against the seven-day week enforced on Colorado Springs culinary workers. The employer ignored the award and the unionists must depend upon their economic power.

RADIO TRUST LOSES IN TWO U. S. DECISIONS

Philadelphia, Sept. 22.—By a two-to-one vote the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals held that the Radio Corporation of America can not compel licensee manufacturers to use only corporation tubes in the construction of receiving sets.

The court approved Federal District Judge Morris's decision that this is a violation of the anti-trust law. Judge Buffington of the Circuit Court held that the Radio Corporation was within its rights.

An appeal will be made to the Supreme Court by the corporation, which has used this provision to control the radio industry.

EMPLOYMENT AGENTS GOUGE JOB SEEKERS

New York, Sept. 22.—The evils of State-licensed employment bureaus were revealed by witnesses before the State Industrial Commission.

Stories of misrepresentation through false advertising, refusal to return fees when no work was obtained, the sending of young girls to immoral resorts, assaults on kitchen workers in summer hotels when they demanded pay and the "generally unwholesome atmosphere of private fee-charging employment agencies" were laid before the commission.

The witnesses included John M. O'Hanlon, secretary New York State Federation of Labor.

The labor turnover in many industries and callings is enormous, it was stated, because of collusion between employment agents and bosses or superintendents. Employment agents charging 10 per cent of the first month's wage for obtaining a job for an applicant are frequently in league with unscrupulous hotel, department store and railroad employes who discharge workers regularly every week or two in order to increase the income of agents who divide their profits with them.

Henry D. Sayer, secretary of the commission, stated that anybody who paid $25 for a license and posted a bond of $1,000 can open an employment agency in this State.

TEXTILE UNION VOTES FOR SURVEY IN SOUTH

New York, Sept. 22.—A survey of working conditions in southern mill towns was ordered by the convention of the United Textile Workers. The survey will be directed by President McMahon with a view to unionizing these sections.

RETAIL FOOD PRICES UP

Washington, Sept. 22.—Food prices increased in 44 of the 51 cities reporting from July 15 to August 15, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Fall River and Pittsburgh lead with a 3 per cent increase.

Seven cities reported a decrease. The 1 per cent list included Denver, Louisville, Peoria and St. Paul. Less than one-half of 1 per cent was reported by Minneapolis, Portland, Ore., and Springfield, Ill.

James Duncan, 1857-1928

The granite that James Duncan shaped as a craftsman was emblematic of his life.

The late A. F. of L. first vice president was the last active trade unionist of that small band of mariners who launched the A. F. of L. nearly half a century ago.

Since then the frail bark has developed into a weather-beaten institution whose principles are woven into the consciousness of millions of wage workers.

James Duncan was steadfast in his trade union philosophy. The greater the storm the straighter did "Jim" Duncan's flag fly above the tumult.

He was unflinching in the belief that workers could develop their lives only through voluntary organization and education. He never swerved from this belief that was often almost engulfed by numberless programs and plans offered workers in the early history of the A. F. of L.

He was uncompromising for his principle, was generous to defeated foes and was a pal to friends whom he always held.

His world grasp of social problems threw him in contact with rulers of state, but he was the same "Jim" Duncan to those with whom he struggled for a better day.

His life is an inspiration to every trade unionist who admires character and conviction. Such moral strength and certainty of purpose is essential in an age that is too prone to do homage to the panderer who would divide when he fails to conquer.

COMMUNISTS ARE JOKERS

The observance of Tolstoy's centenary by the Russian government is the prize joke.

Tolstoy's life was a contradiction of everything Communistic. He pleaded for non-resistance, fraternity and literal obedience to Christ's words. Force in every form was abhorrent to Tolstoy.

The Communist is the embodiment of force. It is not good tactics to reveal this position, which was opposed by Tolstoy, and who was despised by revolutionists.

If Tolstoy were alive he would flay these "reds," with their centralized government and rulership from above.

Tolstoy could not be fooled by honeyed pleas of revolutionists. They would risk a world's censure by standing him before a firing squad, as is being done with thousands of unknown Russian heroes who dare to plead for elemental liberty.

But Tolstoy is dead and the hundredth anniversary of his birth is celebrated by men who gag free speech, censor the press and murder those who profess even a fraction of his ideals.

The cheap gesture of Communists should be repudiated by thoughtful people.

CALL FOR CONVENTION ISSUED BY A. F. OF L.

Washington, Sept. 22.—The A. F. of L. executive council has issued the call for the annual convention to be held in New Orleans, beginning November 19 next.

"New problems arising out of industrial development present themselves for consideration, analysis and solution," says the council in urging unions to be represented.

"Naturally, these problems affect the well-being and happiness of all working people. Let us present labor's formula as a remedy for industrial ills and social injustice. We can do this in an impressive and effective way if all organizations affiliated with the A. F. of L. are fully represented.

"You will be benefited by being there and the labor movement will be helped by your presence, your counsel and your service."

Calls have also been issued for annual conventions in the same city by the Building Trades, the Metal Trades and the Union Label Trades Departments of the A. F. of L.

MOVIE OPERATORS GAIN

Peoria, Ill., Sept. 22.—Organized movie operators secured a two-years' wage contract that increases wages $2.50 a

RUSSIAN PEASANTS BARELY EXIST; FIRING SQUADS WORK OVERTIME

Washington, Sept. 22.—Five-sixths of Russia's 150,000,000 population are peasants who are "scratching out a bare existence by tilling the soil," said Senator Thomas, on returning from a visit to Russia and other European countries. The other 15 per cent of the population live in the cities and towns. Approximately one-half of this element is engaged in manufacturing.

"There is but one party in Russia, the Communist," said Senator Thomas. "No other party is even permitted to get started. Agitators are jailed or shot.

"There are few motor cars in Russia, their admission being denied for the reason that such luxury is held to be a bad influence to parade before the workers and peasants.

"Along with everything else, the newspapers are operated by the government; hence, in addition to censored news items, the columns are filled with communistic propaganda for the party in power. While foreign trade and scientific papers and journals are admitted, no foreign paper with possible reading matter antagonistic to the Russian program is permitted to get across the border.

"Practically all property has been nationalized—confiscated, held, managed and operated by the government. All land of every kind, farm as well as city and town property, is the property of the government; the farm land being rented to peasants and the city property rented to workers.

"The general appearance of the country, where scythes and wooden rakes are used by harvesters, probably has not changed in many years.

"City property, all occupied by renters, has the usual appearance of rented property where repairs have been neglected.

"Moscow, the capital, with a population of about 2,500,000, resembles a city adjacent to an armed camp in war time; the city is surrounded by army camps with soldiers in constant training and maneuvers, on the ground by day and in the air by night. Russia has a regular army in training of about 700,000 men."

KELLOGG PEACE PACT WON'T AFFECT NAVY

Washington, Sept. 22.—The Kellogg anti-war pact, recently signed by the leading nations, will not affect the navy's building program, according to a statement by Secretary of the Navy Wilbur.

The construction program remains unchanged, and passage will be urged when Congress convenes, said Mr. Wilbur.

The Navy Department asked the last Congress to approve the construction of 71 vessels at a cost of $724,000,000. There were to be 25 light cruisers, 9 destroyer leaders, 32 submarines and 5 aircraft carriers. The bill as passed by the House reduced the proposed construction to 16 vessels at a cost of $274,000,000. This changed bill, with minor amendments by the Senate committee, has been reported to that body and has a favored parliamentary position.

FEDERAL RAIL BOARD ASKED TO ENFORCE LAW

Chicago, Sept. 22.—If the United States Board of Mediation can not protect the rights of employes under the Federal Railway Act of 1926, please inform us that we may be free to defend these rights ourselves.

The above is the substance of a tart telegram forwarded to the board by representatives of 14 unions of employes of the Chicago & Alton Railroad.

Since the shopmen's strike of 1922 this railroad, which is in the hands of a federal receiver, has forced employes to join a company "union." Dues for the fake "union" are deducted from wages. More than three-fourths of the employes retain membership in trade unions affiliated to A. F. of L., but Receiver Bierd refuses to recognize these organizations as representing the employes.

"Can Mr. Bierd and the carrier be compelled to observe the law as plainly written?" the unionists ask the Mediation Board.

WIN FIVE-DAY WEEK

Mt. Vernon, N. Y., Sept. 22.—Members of the Carpenters' Union employed on mill work won their five-day-week strike. They suspended work August 27.

MANLESS POWER PLANT OPERATED IN NEW YORK

New York, Sept. 22.—The New York Edison Company has installed a mechanism that will operate an electric distributing station without a human being within its walls. The new station will supply power sufficient to light the homes of 300,000 families.

If the new station were not operated automatically, it would require the presence of from 12 to 18 men working in three shifts of four or six men each.

The new plant is one of the largest in the world and will be controlled by another station three miles away. The distant operator will not only be able to manipulate the mechanism of the manless station, but will be informed at all times of its condition. Except for a visit made once a week to inspect the apparatus, the station will be empty at all times. A complete burglar alarm system on the windows and doors will protect the building electrically.

The operator three miles away can open or close any switch, placing in service the various transformers and circuits by pressing keys which send over wires electric impulses of the dot and dash system used in telegraphy. He will receive automatic signals from the station, which will inform him whether the equipment is functioning properly.

EQUITY JUDGE SHRINKS UNDER PUBLIC CENSURE

Chicago, Sept. 22.—Stinging criticism of Federal Judge Wilkerson's injunction against organized musicians has affected the author of this serf edict, and he would now inquire if an emergency did exist when he signed the order.

The court asked attorneys for the workers to join with opposite counsel to investigate the so-called emergency. The workers' attorneys privately suggest that Judge Wilkerson should raise this point before he signed the order, and not wait until unionists showed their contempt for the order by suspending work and forcing an agreement from theater owners.

Judge Wilkerson secured his first notoriety when he issued an edict against striking railroad shop men, at the request of Attorney General Harry Daugherty.

City-wide opposition to his recent order has shocked the judge. He commanded the musicians not to cease work without the consent of employers. The Movie Picture Operators' Union, the Theatrical Stage Employes and the Theatrical Janitors' Union all quickly notified the musicians that they would join in the fight the instant they suspended work.

It was this solidarity that alarmed the theater owners. They reached an agreement and asked Judge Wilkerson to withdraw his order.

To save his face, the court wants to "investigate" after peace has been restored.

7-DAY WEEK FOR LABOR; OWNERS WANT LESS OIL

New York, Sept. 22.—International oil magnates are conferring on methods to limit production and in Oklahoma this movement has gone so far that the State Corporation Commission has set a limit on output.

The world movement is headed by W. C. Teagle, president of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, and by English and Dutch operators.

The old competitive theory has been replaced by a belief that output should be limited. This sabotage of production is approved in every influential quarter, but the five-day week for workers, that is urged because of overproduction, is resisted.

In the mid-continent oil fields of the United States oil well workers are compelled to labor seven days a week.

CO-OP. BUYING BY FARMERS

Washington, Sept. 22.—Between 25 and 30 large-scale farmers' cooperative buying associations purchased supplies last year to the value of $60,000,000 for their 250,000 patrons, according to the Department of Agriculture.

INJUNCTION JUDGES IGNORE LAW; COURT ALONE INTERPRETS ORDER

By VICTOR A. OLANDER

Secretary-Treasurer Illinois State Federation of Labor

No man in the United States can lawfully be compelled to remain in the service of another against his will. That liberty is one of the glories of American law. Its denial is one of the inequities of the American injunction, for under that peculiar system a judge may issue an order against any citizen which would be unconstitutional if enacted as a law by Congress.

It is fundamental that no law can be constitutional which is so written that it can not be understood by anyone except its author. Yet injunctions in labor disputes frequently contain language so vague that none but the judge who issued the order can tell what it means.

The supporters of the injunction system may claim that the injunction is different from law and that, therefore, the arguments which apply to law do not properly apply to injunctions. They are right! The law and the injunction are frequently so different as to be completely out of harmony with each other.

If a citizen believes a law—an act of Congress or the Legislature—to be unconstitutional he may challenge that law by disregarding or violating it and, if he can then prove the law to be erroneous, no penalty attaches to his disobedience. That is one of the essential liberties of the American citizen.

But our courts do not recognize any such liberty in relation to the judicial edicts or court orders known as injunctions. Even though the citizen proves to the satisfaction of the higher courts that it is an improper order, nevertheless he is punished for having disobeyed it.

Thus the injunction is actually placed above the law.

JAMES DUNCAN PASSES ON; LAST FOUNDER OF A. F. OF L.

Quincy, Mass., Sept. 22.—James Duncan, first vice president A. F. of L., died at his home in this city, following several months' illness.

He was the one remaining active trade unionist of the score of delegates to the Columbus, Ohio, convention of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, in 1886, when that organization dissolved and the A. F. of L. was formed. Others in that historic group were Samuel Gompers, representing the Cigar Makers, and Peter J. McGuire, representing the Carpenters.

Mr. Duncan was born in Scotland, 71 years ago. After an apprenticeship as a granite cutter he migrated to New York, where he associated with workers who were dissatisfied with the one-big-union feature of the Knights of Labor. He was elected secretary of the granite cutters, New York branch, in 1881, and secretary of the Baltimore branch three years later.

He was general president of the Granite Cutters' International Association from 1895 to 1923. He led the granite cutters in their successful fight for the eight-hour day in 1900.

He was elected second vice president A. F. of L. in 1894 and four years later was chosen first vice president. He had been a continuous delegate to A. F. of L. conventions from 1886 until the Los Angeles meeting, last year. Because of illness it was his first absence in 41 years, but he was unanimously re-elected first vice president.

In 1898 he was A. F. of L. fraternal delegate to the British Trades Union Congress, and in 1911 he represented the A. F. of L. at the International Secretariat when that convention of world trade unionists met at Budapest, Hungary.

In 1913 he was selected as one of five United States Commissioners to report on workmen's compensation, and in 1917 he was appointed by President Wilson envoy extraordinary on a diplomatic mission to Russia.

In 1919 he was again selected by President Wilson for an important position, this time as a member of the American labor mission to the Peace Conference in Paris.

The funeral, conducted in Masonic Temple in this city, was attended by A. F. of L. President Green, Secretary Frank Morrison, Treasurer Tobin and Vice Presidents Rickert, Ryan, Wilson and Noonan. A large number of national and international union executives were also present, as were representatives of state federations, city central bodies and local unions.

President Green paid an eloquent tribute to the life work of the departed trade unionist, who is survived by his widow.

The passing of Mr. Duncan leaves Secretary Frank Morrison senior official in point of service in the A. F. of L.

MACHINISTS URGE FIVE-DAY WEEK; LAW-IGNORING MANAGERS SCORED

Atlanta, Sept. 22.—"The time has passed when those who labor need justify every crumb of improvement in their conditions by the plea that without it they can not exist," declared officers of the International Association of Machinists in their report to the eighteenth convention, held in this city.

The report is marked by a confident spirit and the workers are urged to insist on a greater share of the products of industry.

"The five-day week is demanded because workers have the right to benefit by the fruits of industrial progress," declare these unionists.

"The worker is entitled to the briefest possible working time which modern machine methods will enable him to secure and at the same time satisfy the needs of society. To be satisfied with less is to forego his just due."

The report includes statements from employers' sources which prove that the five-day week is practicable because of overproduction.

Railroad managers who have ignored the railroad labor act by refusing to treat with unions selected by their employes were denounced.

The honor, good faith and integrity that these managers profess is labeled "Bosh" by the unionists.

"The law does not mean anything to these men, who are apparently appointed to the positions they occupy because of the very fact that they are unscrupulous. This type of employer, represented by some railroad officials, is comparable to the 'reds' and the Communists the world over."

The report includes the significant suggestion that when the pendulum swings the other way "we may possibly be inclined to pay in kind."

POINDEXTER DEFEATED; WOULD OUTLAW STRIKES

Seattle, Sept. 22.—Miles C. Poindexter, former United States Senator and Ambassador to Peru, was defeated by Kenneth MacIntosh, former State Supreme Court Justice, for the nomination for Senator on the Republican ticket.

Poindexter faced the united opposition of organized labor in this state because of his advocacy of a federal anti-strike law following the Armistice. He, together with Governor Allen of Nebraska and Senator Myers of Montana, joined the public clamor for anti-strike legislation that had been created by anti-union forces.

ILLINOIS MINERS RATIFY NEW SCALE

Springfield, Ill., Sept. 22.—Illinois miners approved the wage agreement negotiated by representatives and coal owners in this state.

Secretary Nesbit notified all locals: "According to reports from state tellers on their tabulation of the referendum vote, the proposed new wage agreement has been ratified by a vote of 26,836 to 25,497."

The new scale will be in force four years. It calls for 91 cents per ton and $6 for day workers as compared to the Jacksonville scale of $1.08 for tonnage workers and $7.50 for day men.

The agreement follows a recent decision by the Policy Committee of the United Wine Workers that each district be empowered to negotiate agreements. Wage scales were formerly based on rates in the Central Competitive Field, which comprised western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

MACHINERY OPPOSED BY EUROPEAN PUBLIC

Washington, Sept. 22.—The public in European countries uphold labor's opposition to machinery on the ground that this will increase unemployment, according to a study of the European textile industry, just published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The study was made by the Assistant Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Charles E. Baldwin, who spent four months abroad.

"In all of the countries visited," said Mr. Baldwin, "there were large numbers of persons unemployed and public sentiment generally, as well as the workers, was strongly antagonistic to the introduction of labor-saving machinery and methods that would reduce the number of jobs; therefore, there was little inducement for the employer to attempt to develop mass production through the introduction of labor-saving machinery and devices."

Mr. Baldwin found it difficult to find a basis for comparing American and European textile output. "It was well-nigh impossible," he said, "to bring together for the various establishments the total time costs of all the processes of manufacture from the wool in the grease to the finished cloth packed for shipment. In view of this fact no attempt was made to arrive at overhead expenses, cost of management, material, etc."

In the United States, manufacturers quite generally have worked out the money cost of production, the study reveals.

LABOR PARTY PLAN REJECTED BY TYPOS

Charleston, S. C., Sept. 22.—President Howard led the fight in the International Typographical Union convention against the establishment of a labor party "whenever a majority of the unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor favor such a proposal." The plan was rejected by an overwhelming vote.

The same treatment was meted out to a proposal that the convention favor a nation-wide referendum to ascertain the sentiment of the country regarding the repeal or modification of the Volstead act. The vote would be provided for and regulated by Congress.

Seattle was selected as the next convention city.

MEDICAL CZAR LOSES FIGHT WITH TEACHERS

New York, Sept. 22.—A medical czar of the Board of Education has lost his fight to retire Mary B. C. Byrne, a teacher, because of "mental incapacity."

The Teachers' Union took up the case, and on an appeal to the Board of Retirement one member said, after hearing the teacher present her case: "If that woman is suffering from psychosis, so am I."